

we wrote the third assistant postmaster general regarding a clarification of this ruling and received the following reply:

"Where a separate title is given such matter as in the case of that appearing in the '.....,' and volume and serial numbers are shown in connection therewith which are different from those of the publication itself, the effect is to give the matter the appearance of being a publication separate and independent from the second-class publication. This is objectionable. In order to prevent a question arising over whether such matter is permissible in copies of publications entered as second-class matter, the practice of giving it independent numbers should be discontinued. There would be no objection to embodying matter like that mentioned in copies of a second-class publication under a sub-title which would indicate plainly that the matter was a department or section of the publication, but in any event it should not be given independent volume and serial numbers. It is suggested that a 'Sub-High Department' or 'The Warren High Section' be adopted for the matter."—*Massachusetts Press Association Bulletin*.

THE TEACHER'S LETTER BOX

Dear Letter Box:

Please send me names and addresses of places where I can get some units for the primary grades.

I want to teach a unit but hardly know how to begin. Can you help me?

Rose F.

Dear Rose F.:

The best single units available for purchase that I know of are the McCall *Lesson Unit Series*, Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City. They average about thirty-five cents a piece. A postcard will bring you a catalog with titles, descriptions, and prices.

You might also write W. F. Quarrie Company, 35 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, for information about *Unit Teaching Materials*. This is a file of units from which

teachers can borrow. You must, however, agree to send in at least one report of a unit worked out in your own classroom.

Another source for units is the F. A. Compton Company, Fifth Avenue, New York City. These cost considerably more than the McCall units but each includes considerable subject matter and some carefully selected pictures for the children's use.

Why don't you read some good books to give you background and work out your own activities? A good one to begin on is Reed and Wright, *The Beginnings of the Social Sciences in the Primary Grades*, Charles Scribner's Sons. Then there is Gustin and Hayes, *Activities in a Public School*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill. A third book, not so new but still one of the best, is Porter, *The Teacher in the New School*, World Book Company, Yonkers, New York.

Another thing you might do is to subscribe to *Childhood Education*. This magazine contains not only descriptive reports of units but stimulating articles which will guide you in the larger problem of providing a situation in which children can grow. The subscription price is \$2.00 unless you form a club of ten, when it is \$1.50 each. The address is 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

Dear Letter Box:

We are working hard at the New Curriculum in our school this year. We want to make sure that our children make real progress. One thing that I am trying to do is to use the arithmetic charts in Section IV of the *Course of Study*. But there is where I am stuck! What do the two column heads about instruction really mean? Now don't tell me, as you used to, to read the explanation. I have read page 264 of the 1937 edition most carefully and seem to understand it. That is, until I go to apply it in my classroom. So please send me along a few illustrations.

Mary

Dear Mary:

Do you remember how I always used to tell you something else? That arithmetic is not taught in the elementary school because

it is in courses of study. Rather it is in courses of study because children need it in their daily living. The young child has a feel for the quantitative side of things as long as the abstract is not too hurriedly forced on him. By school age many of his activities are anemic and vague without computation or measurement. So arithmetic is used continually in the good school. The crackers are counted for lunch or the children for the game. The wood is measured for the wagon or the flour for the cookies. The accounts are kept for the ticket sale or for the supplies purchased. And so on!

Time is always saved by teaching an idea or a process at the time it is needed. When a child thus uses arithmetic intelligently and accurately, conditions most favorable to learning are set up. Under such circumstances a child often comes to understand a process without any teaching save that done in connection with real situations. Moreover, if the real situations occur often enough and the process is a simple one, even skill sometimes results without further teaching.

But all processes are not so simple, long division for instance. And, don't whisper it even, but some teachers lack the vision to see sufficient places where arithmetic is needed. So to insure understanding, supplementary experiences must often be arranged, work with objects or with stories involving number situations. And in the same way, in order to insure skill, extra practice must be provided.

So now by a backing-in process I have come to the columns on the abilities charts in Section IV. When the committee felt that the idea or process could be taught successfully in connection with real situations, they put a check in the column headed "Instruction within the Unit Probably Adequate." In the same way when they felt that supplementary experiences and practice would usually be necessary, they put a check in the column headed "Instruc-

tion in Addition to that in Unit Probably Required."

Now by way of good measure, there are two points about these charts you should get very clearly in mind. First, the headings in both columns include the word *instruction*. Real situations give meaning and motive, thereby shortening the learning process. But no child should be asked to acquire control of such a systematic tool as arithmetic without direct teaching. Life is too short and the confusion coming from gaps in his learning is too tragic. In the second place, the heading *Teaching Emphasis* means just that. The blocking in under this heading indicates stress in teaching in an average situation and not *Minimum Essentials* for any grade or any child. Children grow at different rates, so provisions for individual differences must be made. This is particularly true in arithmetic because of its systematic nature. So teach that big overgrown boy who can't add how to do it (if you can) regardless of the fact that long division is blocked in heavily for your grade.

THE READING TABLE

THE NEW CULTURE. By A. Gordon Melvin. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1937. 296 pp. \$2.90.

Sub-titled *An Organic Philosophy of Education*, Dr. Melvin's latest book departs from the typical text in this field and has developed in vital, compelling language such new themes as relativity, the nature of energy, the relation of spirit and matter, personality, and the work of the community. While the point of view throughout stresses the organic principle, the text and its organization often depart from this in the transitions from theme to theme.

One sound principle on which the author has tried to build is that educational philosophy must be thoroughly grounded in general philosophy. Three rather practical chapters comprising two-thirds of the book deal with elementary, secondary, and col-